

inhabitants of the Netherlands as heretics, with some trifling exceptions, the chief difficulty was one of selection. It was, happily, a sheer impossibility to slaughter three millions of men, women, and children, though the miserable bigot at Madrid, and his savage viceroy in the Netherlands, believed that the mightier the torrent of heretic blood, the greater their merit in the sight of heaven. Nor was bigotry the only incentive to the bloody work. Alva had promised to turn Spainwards a golden stream a yard deep, and, in order to feed the stream, wealth was treason as well as heresy or sedition. Thus the most fanatic and the most sordid motives contributed to swell the holocaust to mammon and the savage deity of Philip and the Inquisition. The sickening total mounted up in the end to over eighteen thousand persons, as Alva himself, with exaggeration perhaps, proudly boasted. It is needless to enlarge on this gruesome business, whose details bring down the curse of God and man on its authors, and the honour and responsibility of which Philip and Alva openly and unreservedly took upon themselves. Let millions perish if only the autocratic will of one man and the theological jargon of the bloodstained bigots of the Inquisition may dominate over the wilderness made by torture, execution, confiscation, exile !

Inexplicable though it appears, even Alva has had his apologists and panegyrists. One of the most distinguished of these among modern historians, the German Leo, has striven hard to make a hero of him. Leo has certainly succeeded in producing a masterpiece of wrongheadedness and *ex parte* statement; he has not succeeded in "whitewashing" Alva any better than another distinguished German historian has succeeded in whitewashing Tiberius. M. Gachard, whose special knowledge of the period entitles him to speak with a far higher authority than the eccentric German, has painted the picture of Alva's *regime* in its true colours. The colouring is sombre enough, but it is not overdone. " The arrival of the Duke of Alva and the Spanish army in these provinces was followed by a series of arbitrary acts and oppressive measures. The Counts of Egmont and Horn treacherously arrested and shut up in a narrow prison; a crowd of gentlemen and burghers partaking their fate ; the Count of Buren (William's